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Message Text

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62
ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 HEW-06 /021 W
---------- 025974
R 232143Z DEC 75
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2551
INFO USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
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AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO 401
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 441
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

UNCLAS BOGOTA 12320

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: OEXC, CO
SUBJ: SEMINAR ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE AMERICAS

REF: STATE 25437

1. CAO AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMISSION MET WITH IO FORMER PARTICIPANTS IN SEMINAR TO ELICIT THEIR RESPONSE TO SUSPENSION OF PROGRAM AND TO GET SUGGESTIONS ON WHETHER IT SHOULD BE CONTINUED AND, IF SO, HOW IT COULD BE IMPROVED. THERE ARE 27 COLOMBIAN FORMER PARTICIPANTS. 18
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ARE STILL ACTIVE IN HIGHER EDUCATION (SEVERAL IN

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POSITIONS AS RECTORS AND ONE AS DIRECTOR OF ICFES)
AND 9 OTHER WORK OUTSIDE HIGHER EDUCATION , ALTHOUGH
ONLY TEMPORARILY FOR SOME.

2. EVALUATION POSITION

GENERAL FEELING IS THAT THE SEMINARS HAVE BEEN INTERESTING,
WORTHWHILE AND FRUITFUL. PARTICIPANTS IN MEETING
EXPLAINED THROUGH EXAMPLES HOW USEFUL INSIGHTS AND CONTACTS
MADE HAD BENEFITTED THEM.

FOR EXAMPLE, IDEAS OF DEVELOPING STRUCTURE OF ACADEMIC
DEPARTMENTS, AND ALSO IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTIONAL
EVALUATION WERE IMPLEMENTED IN SEVERAL WAYS AS
CONSEQUENCE OF THERE SEMINARS. ONE OUTSTANDING VALUE OF
THE SEMINAR IS EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH LATIN AMERICAN
AND U. S. COLLEAGUES. ALSO, SOME PUBLICATIONS
PRODUCED AFTER SOME VERSIONS OF THE SEMINAR HAVE BEEN USEFUL.
FOR EXAMPLE, TWO PARTICIPANTS IN THE 1960 SEMINAR WROTE
BOOKS ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT INITIATIVE, LIKE THE CREATION OF A
DOCUMENTATION CENTER ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA,
NOW APPARENTLY BEING ORGANIZED IN CARACAS.

OVERALL, THE SEMINAR WAS APPRAISED AS ENRICHING EXPERIENCE,
AS EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN AND TO ACQUIRE USEFUL
BACKGROUND, AND AS USEFUL EVENT FOR PRODUCING POTENTIALLY
VALUABLE WORK FOR THE FUTURE.

3. NEGATIVE

CRITISISM OF U. S. PARTICIPATION AS MOSTLY TO TEACH AND LATIN
AMERICAN PARTICIPATION AS THAT OF LEARNERS WAS EVIDENT IN
MOST CASES, EVEN THOUGH DIALOGUES AND DISCUSSIONS WERE
FREQUENT. THE EMPHASIS ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE U. S.
HIGHER EDUCATION WAS CONSIDERED EXCESSIVE. THE TOPICS
INCLUDED ARE NOT RESTRICTED TO THE ANNOUNCED THEMES AND
TENDED TO COVER TOO MUCH. THE REPORTS HAVE NOT REACHED
SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS AND SOME, NOTABLY THE 1975 REPORT
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ARE NOT CONSIDERED AN ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE SEMINAR.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. SEMINAR SHOULD CONTINUE.

B. OBJECTIVES: CONTACTS WITH LATIN AMERICAN AND U. S.
COLLEAGUES SHOULD BE EXPRESSED AS IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE AND

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FRUITFUL MUTUAL INTERCHANGE INVITED.

OTHER SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES MUST BE CLEARLY STATED IN ORDER
TO AVOID ACTIVITIES UNRELATED TO THE AGENDA AND TO ASSURE
ACHIEVEMENT..

C. METHODOLOGY

NEED FOR DEEPER INVOLVEMENT ON LATIN AMERICAN ISSUES
WAS STRESSED BY MOST PARTICIPANTS. MORE FORMAL CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM LATIN AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS COULD BE REQUESTED
TO IMRPOVE BALANCE. IDEA OF DOUBLE PHASE SEMINAR
WAS PRESENTED; THAT IS, AN EQUAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
FROM LATIN AMERICA AND FROM U. S. WILL INTERCHANGE ROLES,
CONTINUOUSLY, SO THAT HALF OF TIME ONE GROUP WILL BE
LECTURING WHILE THE OTHER GROUP WILL BE LISTENING AND VICE-
VERSA.

D. TOPICS

SPECIFICS TOPICS MUST BE RELATED TO OBJECTIVES.
BETTER FOCUS WILL ENABLE THE SEMINAR TO WORK TOWARD
IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS AND IMAGINATIVE
SOLUTIONS THEREOF.TOPICS SHOULD BE DEFINED WITH PRESENT
(OR FUTURE) ISSUES IN LATIN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES IN MIND.
COMPARATIVE EDUCATION POSSIBLE THEME.

E. SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

BETTER BALANCE OF LATIN AMERICAN AND U. S. PARTICIPANTS
RECOMMENDED, BOTH IN NUMBERS AND IN ROOES PLAYED. SINCE
THE RECTORSHIPS IN LATIN AMERICAN UNIVIERSITIES
ARE TEMPORARY POSITIONS, ADVISABLE TO SELECT PARTICIPANTS
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AMONG STABLE PROFESSORS WITH LEADERSHIP QUALITIES. SHOULD BE
HOMOGENEOUS IN ITS INTERESTS AND BACKGROUNDS. FIRST SEMINAR
WAS CONSIDERED VERY SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE PARTICIPANTS
WERE ALL DEANS OF PHILOSOPHY AND HUMANITIES.

F. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

SOME PARTICIPANTS FAVOR LESS TRAVEL SINCE IT DISTRACTS AND
INTERRUPTS THE CONTINUITY OF THE DISCUSSION. BUT
OTHERS RECOMMEND SEMINAR TO VISIT TWO UNIVERSITIES IN
LATIN AMERICA AND TWO IN THE U. S. BECAUSE THEY SEE GREAT
VALUE IN THESE VISITS. MORE TIME REQUESTED TO GET BETTER
KNOWLEDGE OF UNIVERSITIES VISITED. THE UNIVERSITIES
VISITED SHOULD BE CHANGED EACH SESSION TO ALLOW FOR
INNOVATIONS, U. S. UNIVERSITIES SHOULD BE SELECTED

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AMONG THOSE STRONGLY INTERESTED IN LATIN AMERICA, AS
KANSAS AND NEW MEXICO HAVE BEEN. IN FUTURE VERSIONS OF THE
SEMINAR THE PARTICIPANTS MUST SEND AND RECEIVE IN ADVANCE
THE PAPERS TO BE DISCUSSED FOR A BETTER UTILIZATION
OF THE TIME DURING THE ACTUAL SEMINAR.
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